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SPAWN



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McFARLANE
AFTER ME.

imageTM

COMICS PRESENTS:

"IN HEAVEN"



TM

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TM

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nom. deplume scan


image



y'know, seriously, that's gotta be the worst thing ever happened to me, that thing comin' outta the dark.




to be honest, i still don't think i'm completely over it.



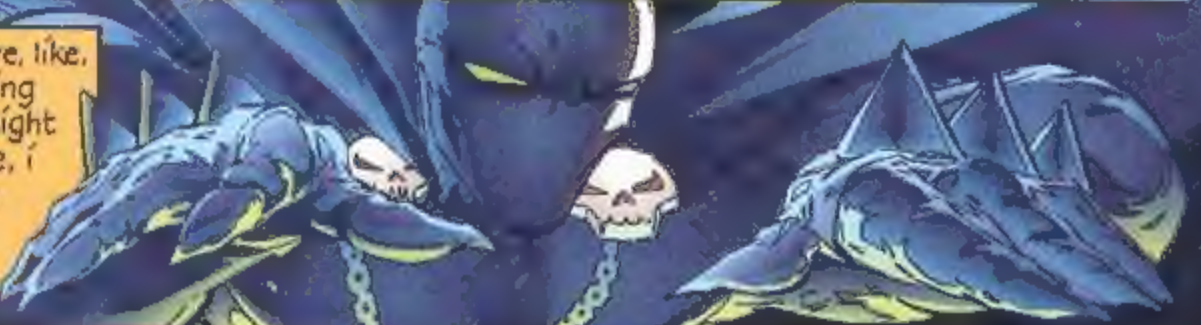
i mean, nobody deserves **that!** not even, say, somebody who did twenty-seven kids and kept the bodies in his ice cream truck.

which i didn't.

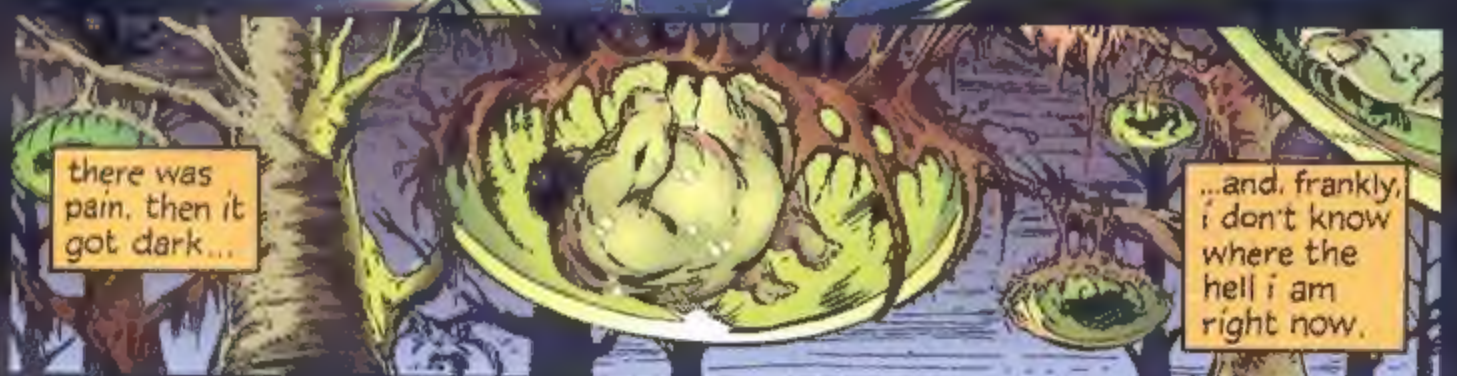


and even if i did, isn't there a constitutional rights issue here? hmmm?

i mean, jeez, the guy coulda killed me!



it was unreal! i've, like, just finished putting number twenty-eight in the deep freeze, i hear these chains rattlin', okay? i turned around...



there was pain, then it got dark...

...and, frankly, i don't know where the hell i am right now.



i have a problem with this naked stuff. so i kill this sorta four-eyed lizard thing and take its skin for clothing.

actually, thinking about it, this is not so good.

i'm sticky. i'm buck naked.

what kind of afterlife is this?

i just noticed i'm not breathing inside this sack of syrup, so i guess i'm dead, and i've gone somewhere religious.

it's nice. knowing you can still kill things when you're dead.

i just wish there were more people around is all.

IN HELL
(EVERYTHING IS FINE)



H-HELLO?

uh?



M-MY NAME'S KIMBERLY? AND, AND I HAVE THIS, LIKE, EATING DISORDER? AND NEXT THING I KNOW I'M A FRUIT, GROWING ON A TREE?

HAS THAT EVER HAPPENED TO YOU?

BECAUSE, Y'KNOW, SOMETHING LIKE THAT HAPPENED TO ALL THESE PEOPLE? ONE MINUTE DYING, NEXT MINUTE IN SOME ORCHARD?



outside the orchard there's nothing but wilderness. still, it's not like we got anywhere else to go.

jeez, what a buncha stiffs.



Oh, incidentally, this is LARRY, CLAUDETTE, BOB, AND LITTLE JESSICA?

AND YOU'RE MISTER...?



chill-ee. mister chill-ee. real name's billy. kincaid.

mr. chill-ee's my professional name.




kid's cute, though.



well, since we're in the same boat, it makes sense we stick together. I say first we get outta this orchard...

...before anything comes looking for windfall.



THIS IS JUST SO WEIRD, RIGHT, BECAUSE I DO A LOT OF CHANNELLING? TALKING TO DEAD PEOPLE? AND NONE OF THEM MENTIONED THIS?

THERE'S TEN DEAD-LANDS.


LIKE SPHERES, ONE INSIDE ANOTHER.

THIS IS JUST THE LOWEST SPHERE; THE RECEPTION AREA. IF YOU WANT TO GO HIGHER YOU'LL HAVE TO CLIMB THE TOWER...

OH! OH, LORD! LOOK AT THIS, EVERYBODY!!

HE'S COME FOR ME! I KNEW HE WOULD!

I WENT IN FOR MY GALL BLADDER OPERATION AN' I WOKE UP GROWIN' IN THAT ORCHARD BUT I KNEW HE WOULDN'T FORGET ME!



COMFORT-
AND-JOY.
SWEET-AND-LOW.
BRIGHT-AND-
BEAUTIFUL.


WHO-
AMONGST-YOU-
SINGETH-THESE-
SONGS?

I DO,
LORD! WHY,
I SING
'EM ALL THE
TIME!



BRIGHT.
BEAUTIFUL.

Comedy: YES TO
CARRY ME
HO-O-O-MY



LISTEN, I'LL
SING ONE FOR
YOU NOW IF
YOU'LL JUST
TAKE ME
UP!

HEY!
THAT AIN'T
NO ANGEL!
IT'S GOT
A WHADJA-
CALLIT,
MOTOR INNA
BACK!

IT WAS A
SOUL-TRAPPER
FROM THE SIXTH
SPHERE. THEY KEEP
THE SOULS AS PETS
THERE, IT'S A
FASHION
THING.

THIS
YEAR IT'S
SINGERS.
LAST YEAR
IT WAS
ACROBATS.

OH, I
LOOK ACROSS
THE JORDAN.
WHAT DO I
SEE-EE...

i think about the kid as we camp down
for the night. so she's a little autistic,
whatever. disturbed. that's natural.

being dead, it's
a disturbing
thing.



but dying's worse.

i dream about it
all night long, the
sound of the
chains, the cloak
flapping, spikes,
skulls.

i never want to see
that thing again.

by my reckoning, night
lasts about three hours
before we get up and
move on. the daylight
here is kinda funny.

no sun, for
one thing.

we ain't set out five minutes when a
ray from the sky disintegrates larry,
the restaurant-owner and drug-
deal fatality from michigan.

HMM.
YOU DON'T
SEE
MANY OF
THOSE.

THAT WAS
THE **PRIME**
MONAD FROM THE
HIGHEST SPHERE,
THE TENTH. HE
HAND-PICKS SOULS
TO USE AS
CIRCUITRY
IN HIS **MACRO-**
COMPUTER.

i mean,
that's gotta
hurt, right?

YOUR
FRIEND'S
LUCKY.



there's not enough of lucky
larry to bury, so we move on, a
way up the trail, fat bob from
wisconsin spots somebody he
knows.

HEY, LOOK
EVERYBODY!
IT'S *ELVIS*!

bob! don't go
near 't! that isn't
the king!

SURE
T S

HEY KING!
YA KNOW I WAS
LISTENING TO "AN
AMERICAN TRILOGY"
WHEN I RAN MY
PICK-UP
UNDER THAT
PETERBILT?

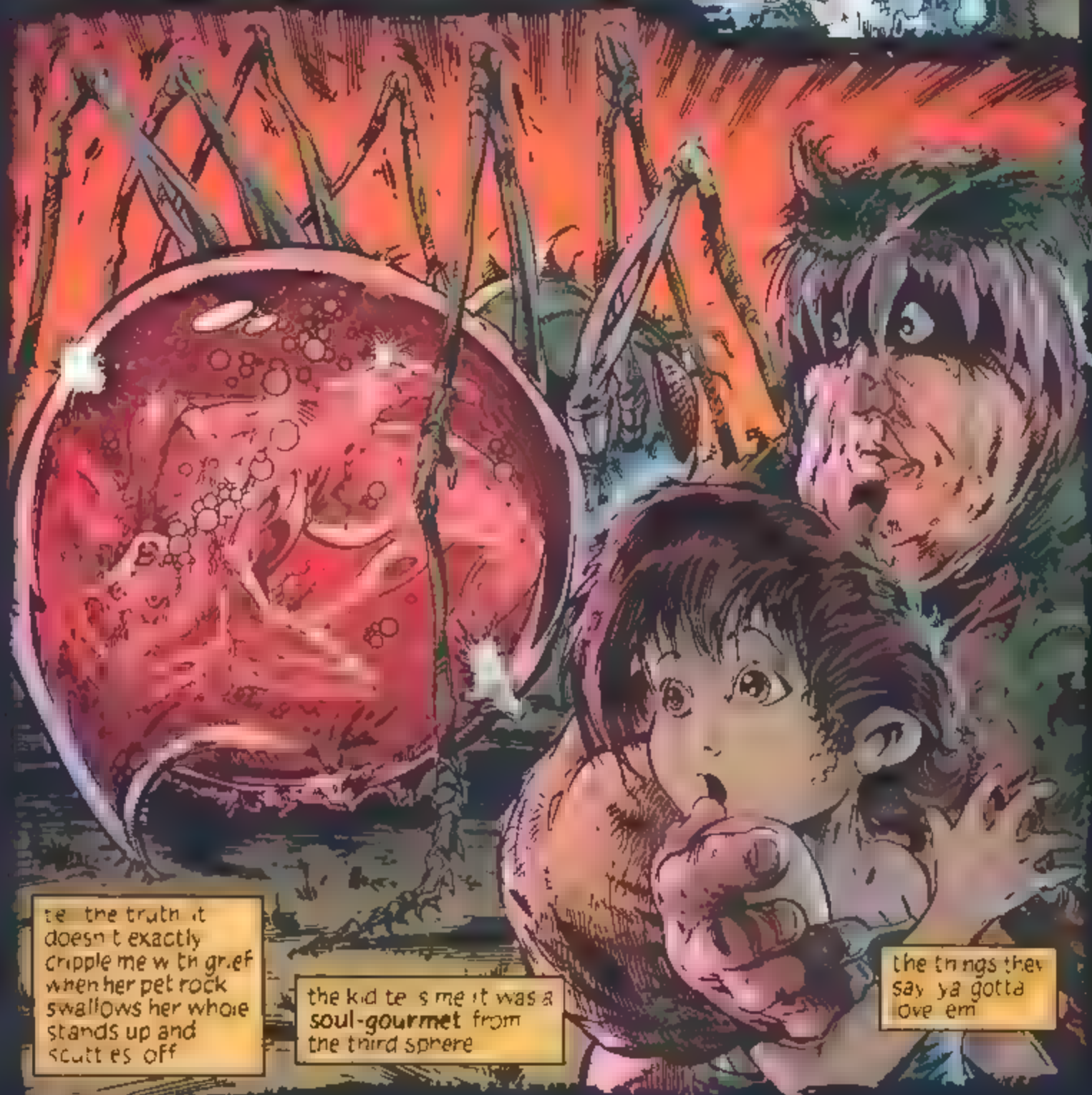
bob!!

THERE'S NOTHING
YOU CAN DO FOR HIM!
THAT'S A *CTHUGAN*
METABUSE FROM THE
FIFTH SPHERE.

THEY GET AN
ADDICTIVE *DRUG RUSH*
FROM THE SOULS OF
PEOPLE LIKE BOB!

the great three of us left the
was a psycho in getting there
and Kimberly ends every sentence
with a question mark

OH YOU SEE
THIS THIS SILLY
LIKE A LUCKY
CRYSTAL I HAD?

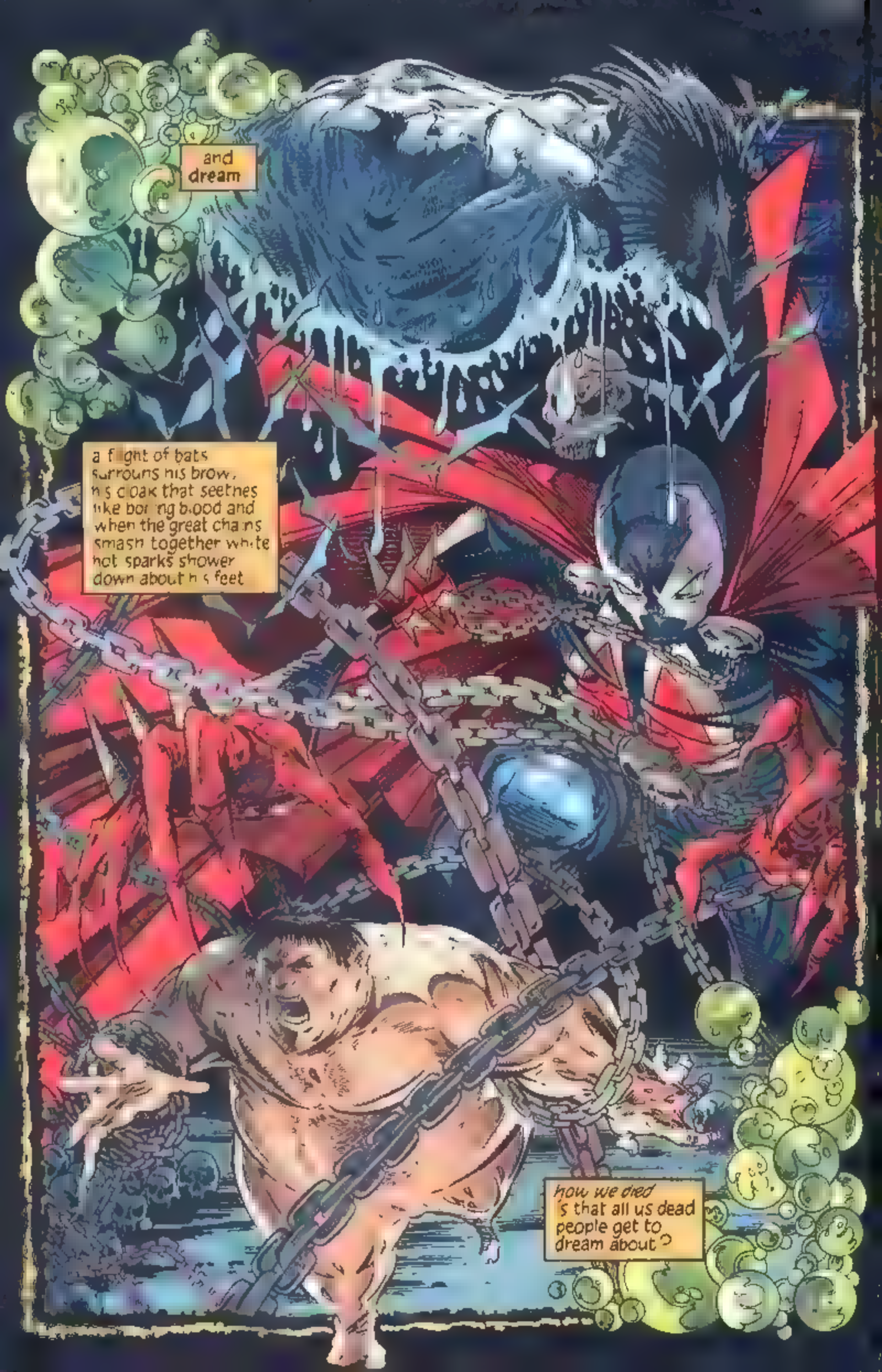


te the truth it
doesn't exactly
cripple me with grief
when her pet rock
swallows her whole
stands up and
scuttles off

the kid tells me it was a
soul-gourmet from
the third sphere

the things they
say ya gotta
love em

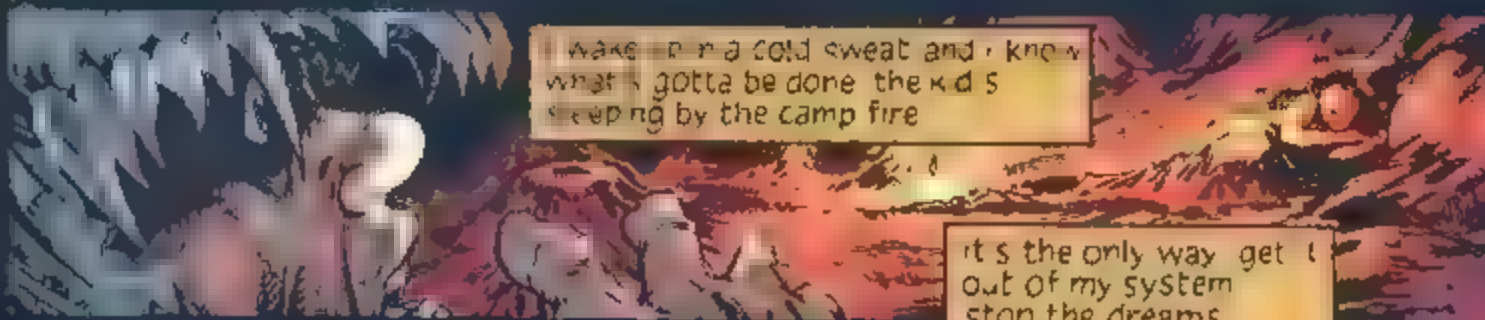
pretty soon after that it gets dark
just a of a sudden how it does
around here the kid finds us a
place where we can sleep



and
dream


a flight of bats
surrounds his brow,
his cloak that seethes
like boiling blood and
when the great chains
smash together white
hot sparks shower
down about his feet

how we died
is that all us dead
people get to
dream about?



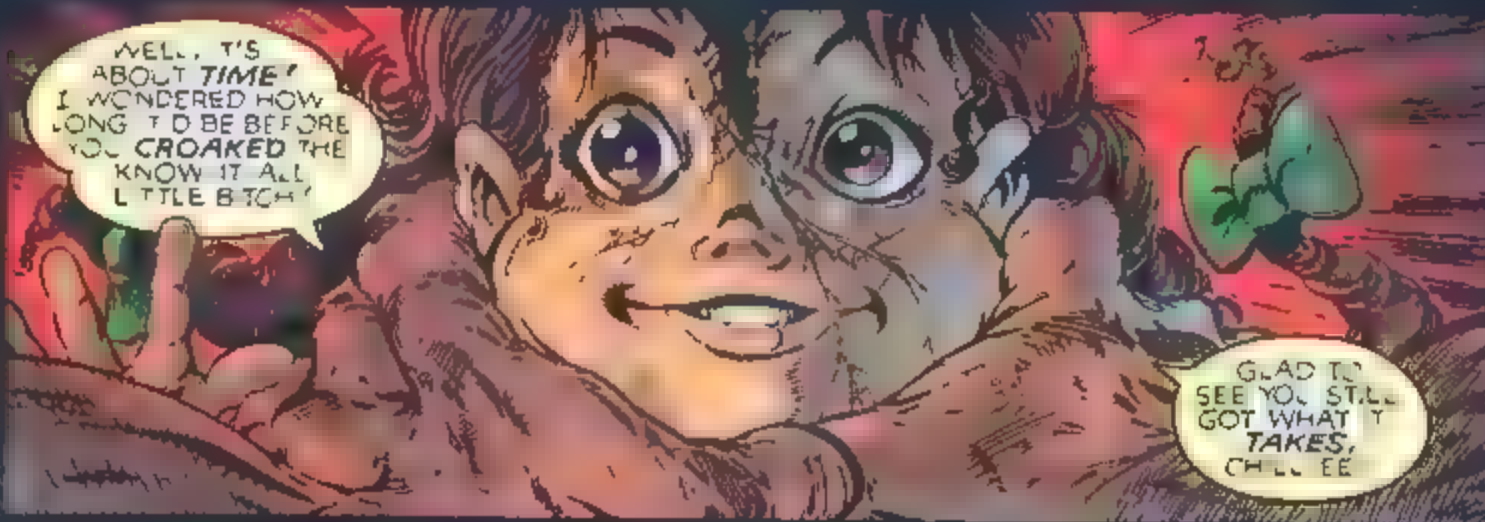
Wake up in a cold sweat and I know
what I gotta be done the kids
sleeping by the camp fire

it's the only way get
out of my system
stop the dreams




Look at her always gets
me how they look when
they're asleep Little
Jessica Little Angel

she ain't gonna
know a thing
about it




WELL, IT'S
ABOUT TIME!
I WONDERED HOW
LONG IT'D BE BEFORE
YOU CROAKED THE
KNOW IT ALL
LITTLE BITCH!

GLAD TO
SEE YOU STILL
GOT WHAT IT
TAKES,
CHILLER



YOU KNOW FOR
A WHILE THERE
WE WERE SCARED
YOU WERE GONNA
WUSS OUT
ON US!




GREAT
DISGUISE huh?
I MEAN FLIMSY
BUT CUTE AS
HELL

I'M THE
VINDICATOR,
ONE O THE
FIVE FAMOUS
PHLEBIAC
BROTHERS.
I GUESS YOU
PROBABLY HEARD
O US

SCRRY BOUT
ENTRAPPIN'
YA LKE THAT I JUST
HADDA MAKE SURE
YOU WUZ THE KINDA
GUY WE WANTED
UP ON THE EIGHTH
SPHERE





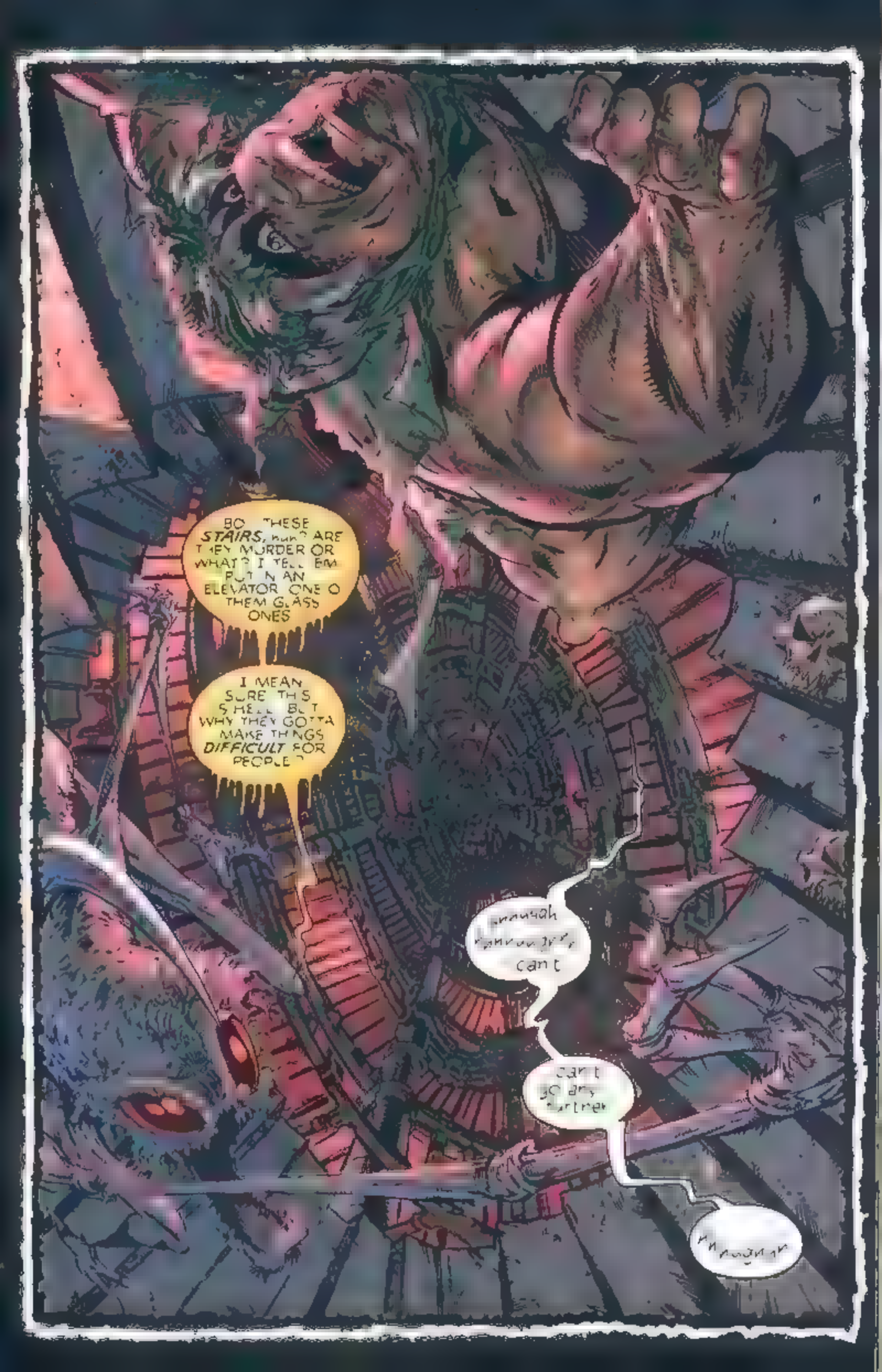
HEY! WHEREAYA
GOIN'? TRUST
ME YOU'LL LIKE
THE EIGHTH SPHERE!
EVERYBODY
DOES!

THAT STUFF
ABOUT T BEIN'
A "REEKING
SULPHUROUS
TORTURE FURNACE
WAS JUST RUMORS,
SPREAD BY BUSINESS
RIVALS!

THOSE SOUL-
SCALPERS ON
THE SECOND
I BET THEY
GOT T IN
FOR US!

gotta get outta here the
kid that thing said the
only way out was up the
tower

y know maybe
st I got a
chance!



BO THESE
STAIRS, HUH? ARE
THEY MURDER OR
WHAT? I TELL EM
PUT IN AN
ELEVATOR ONE O
THEM GLASS
ONES

I MEAN
SURE THS
S HELL BLT
WHY THEY GOTTA
MAKE THNGS
DIFFICULT FOR
PEOPLE?

hahahah
hahahah
cant

cant
go any
further

hahahah

HEY, NO PROBLEM!

YOU WANNA BE A FUR COAT FOR SOME HYPER INTELL GENT ICE SHRIMP ON THE SECOND SPHERE?

I MEAN JUST SAY! I CAN DROP YOU RIGHT OFF!

II

OR WHAT ABOUT THE THIRD SPHERE? HONEST I'D UNDERSTAND

GETTING FILETED AND SERVED WITH A LIGHT PASTRY IS WHAT SOME GUYS LIKE I KNOW THAT

III

BUT Y SEE, YOU YOU'RE SPECIAL YOU'RE A DEAD CHILD MURDERER AND WE APPRECIATE THAT IN A GUY

I WAS GONNA CARRY YA IF YA HADN'T RUN OFF LIKE THAT!

YOU OUGHTTA THINK YOURSELF LUCKY YOU B N HARVESTED BY THE EIGHTH I MEAN, A DEAD GUY LIKE YOU WHAT ARE HIS OPTIONS?

IV

I MEAN HERE ON THE FOURTH YOU'D BE A FUEL ROD!

I'VE SEEN YOU IN ACTION
MR. HELLER. AN I GOTTA
SAY YOU'RE TOO GOOD
FOR THAT

NOW THIS,
THIS PLACE YOU'RE
GONNA LIKE! SOME
CALL IT THE
EIGHTH SPHERE,
SOME CALL IT THE
MALEBOLGE,
BUT ME ..

NO WAY ARE YOU
GONNA END UP AS NOSE
CANDY FOR SOME FIFTH
SPHERE HIPPIE
META-SQUID...

DR SINGING
GOSPEL
FAVORITES IN
AN ELECTRIFIED
BIRD-CAGE
HERE ON THE
SIXTH

CULTURE
AIN'T FOR US WE'RE
MORE STRANGE 'EM
AN-STICK-EM-IN-THE
FREEZER KINDA
GUYS

AS FOR THE
SEVENTH
SPHERE DON'T
ASK 'BOUT THIS
PLACE CALLED
EREBUS, BUT
NOBODY'S
EVER SEEN
INSIDE

WE FIGURE IT'S
SOME SPECIAL HELL
FOR THE MOST DAMNABLE
CREATURES OF ALL

I CALL IT

HOMER!

NOW AS IT
HAPPENS, THE
MALEBOLGIA
HIMSELF IS
LOOKING FOR
SOULS TO JOIN
HIS **ARMY**
SOULS JUST
LIKE YOU

WHAT'S
UP?

It's
pace is
hot! It's
burning my
feet!

OK THAT WON'T
BOTHER YOU ONCE
YOU'RE FITTED OUT
IN YOUR **SLAVE'S**
WEAR ALL THE
MALEBOLGIA'S
CONQUESTS
WEAR IT

HERE
I'LL
WHISTLE
YOUR
UP

PHWEEEET!

LEMME
INTRODUCE
K3-MYRLU. SHE'S
A CONSTANTLY-
EVOLVING **NEURAL**
PARASITE AND I
THINK SHE
LIKES YOU.

no! no not
that!




OK, COME
ON!

LOOK, I
KNOW
WHAT YOU'RE
THINKING:
"NEURAL
PARASITES!
THEY'RE ONLY
AFTER ONE THING!"
BUT JUST GIVE IT
A CHANCE IS
WHAT I'M
SAYIN'.

BELIEVE
ME, I HAVE
A FEELIN' YOU
GUYS ARE GONNA
BE VERY
CLOSE.

EELIAAAGH!



AW, LOOK! SHE'S **BOWLING!**
I TELLYA, WHEN A GAL
LIKE K3-MYRLU BONDS
WITH YA, YA GOTTA
REMEMBER TWO
THINGS...

FIRST,
IT'S FOR
LIFE.

SECOND,
IT'S WITH YOUR
CENTRAL
NERVOUS
SYSTEM.

WOW!
WILLYA LOOK
AT THAT SALIVA
JUST DRIPPING
OFF HER EXO-
FANGS? SHE
REALLY LIKES
YOU, I CAN
TELL.

THERE!
I TELLYA,
YOU AIN'T GONNA
GET A NEAT
DESIGNER UNIFORM
LIKE THAT WORKIN'
IN NO FAST FOOD
FRANCHISE!

FIFTY YEARS
BACK WE GOT A
LOT O' THEM
FASHION-PLATE
NAZIS UP HERE.
AN' THEY RAVED
ABOUT IT!



SO ANYWAY,
NOW YOU'RE ALL
DRESSED UP, GO
MEET YOUR NEW
EMPLOYER!
LOOK... THE GATES
ARE OPENIN'
FOR YA!

but... but
this isn't
fair!



the afterlife
shouldn't be this way,
full of alien monsters
processing humans as
if they were cattle,
and nobody caring about
good or evil!

GOOD?
EVIL?
GIMME A
BREAK!



LIKE WE COULD CARE
LESS IF YOU'RE COVETIN'
YOUR NEIGHBOR'S OX
OR WHATEVER!

I MEAN, WE'RE RUNNIN'
A **BUSINESS** HERE...



...AN' I TELLYA FOR NOTHIN',
THE TWO WORDS CARVED ON
MARBLE IN HELL'S LOBBY
AIN'T "GOOD" OR "EVIL".

IT'S TWO
OTHER
WORDS, AN'
WHAT THEY
SAY IS
THIS...



HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA

"CA-CA HAPPENS,"
LITTLE BUDDY.

"CA-CA
HAPPENS."

NEXT ISSUE:
GAIMAN!